DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 186 450 TM 800 136

TITLE Characteristics of Excellence in Higher Education and Standards for Middle States Accreditation.
INSTITUTION Commission on Higher Education, Philadelphia, Pa. Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools.
PUB DATE 78
NOTE 20p.; For related document, see TM 800 163.
AVAILABLE FROM Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools, 3624 Market Street, Philadelphia, PA 19104 (single copy free)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS Academic Libraries; Academic Standards; *Accreditation (Institutions); Ancillary School Services; College Administration; College Admission; College Curriculum; College Environment; College Faculty; Educational Objectives; Educational Resources; Governing Boards; *Higher Education; Organizational Objectives; School Catalogs; *Standards
IDENTIFIERS *Middle States Association

ABSTRACT

The Commission on Higher Education considers the principles and practices which identify excellence in institutions of higher education. Areas of concern include admissions and student services, faculty, organization and administration, board of trustees, educational resources, library learning center, facilities and equipment, financing and accounting, innovation and experimentation, catalogs and other publications, types of programs, and evaluation. (BH)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

ED186450

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION & WELFARE
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION

THIS DOCUMENT HAS BEEN REPRODUCED EXACTLY AS RECEIVED FROM THE PERSON OR ORGANIZATION ORIGINATING IT. POINTS OF VIEW OR OPINIONS STATED DO NOT NECESSARILY REPRESENT OFFICIAL NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION POSITION OR POLICY

CHARACTERISTICS OF EXCELLENCE IN HIGHER EDUCATION

and

STANDARDS FOR MIDDLE STATES ACCREDITATION

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

R. KiRKwood

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC) AND USERS OF THE ERIC SYSTEM."

TM800136

COMMISSION ON HIGHER EDUCATION
MIDDLE STATES ASSOCIATION OF COLLEGES AND SCHOOLS

Copyright © 1978 by Commission on Higher Education of the
Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools.
All rights reserved.
Printed in the United States of America.

This document is the primary statement of standards endorsed and approved by the Commission on Higher Education and the Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools, December 1977.

Commission on Higher Education — Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools
3624 Market Street, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania 19104 • (215) 662-5600

CHARACTERISTICS OF EXCELLENCE IN HIGHER EDUCATION

and

STANDARDS FOR MIDDLE STATES ACCREDITATION

The qualities and characteristics which distinguish superior educational institutions depend somewhat on the type of institution concerned, but they have important common denominators irrespective of particular settings. In the view of the Commission on Higher Education, these common elements include:

- Clearly stated purposes and objectives appropriate to the institution's resources and the needs of its constituents
- Persistent concern as to the relation between objectives and outcomes
- Curricula which provide, emphasize, or rest upon general or liberal education
- Programs and courses which develop abilities to form independent judgment, to weigh values, to understand fundamental theory, and, where appropriate, are attuned to professional or occupational requirements
- An atmosphere conducive to continuing and broadening each student's education beyond the minimum point necessary to obtain credits, certificates or degrees
- Counselling sensitive to the educational, personal, and career aspirations of students
- Clear definitions of administrative and academic responsibilities
- Emphasis on continuous intellectual and professional staff development, within a secure framework of academic freedom
- A board of trustees actively fulfilling its responsibilities of policy and resource development
- Effective ongoing institutional self-study and planning procedures
- Physical facilities and learning resources proportional to the requirements and nature of the educational program
- Stability of resources to maintain the quality of instruction and assure its continuity

The basic necessity always is a clear definition of an institution's objectives. The educational program must be consistent with that definition, adequate to achieve it, and within the scope of available resources. The students must be appropriate in ability, preparation, and motivation to the objectives and the program. Given these requirements, the effectiveness of any institution depends upon good teaching, upon the ability and commitment of its faculty. Individual and/or sponsored research and public service are considered simply as related and additional dimensions of institutional excellence.

The major index of an institution's quality is the astuteness with which it has defined its task; another is the competence of its faculty. A third is the effectiveness of the programs created to produce the results envisioned in the objectives. The fourth is the resources available to instructors and students, especially in the library, laboratories, and other facilities on or off the campus. These are what truly make an educational institution. Everything else is supplementary – means and devices to facilitate learning – but not unimportant.

An institution will not have the fundamental necessities, at least not at their best or for long, unless it also has substantial support through its governing board, able administrative leadership, and creative, responsible participation by the faculty in developing the total educational program of the institution.

The statements which follow identify principles and practices which the Commission considers characteristic of excellent institutions. They are described qualitatively, rather than quantitatively. They include no formulas for specific application, no endorsements of particular patterns of organization, for the Commission considers the determination of such to be the province of trustees, administration, and faculty. The institution must retain its identity and integrity. The Commission's role is to stimulate improvement and provide standards of reference.

FUNDAMENTAL CHARACTERISTICS OF EXCELLENCE IN HIGHER EDUCATION

PURPOSES AND OBJECTIVES

A fundamental criterion of excellence in an educational institution is the degree of awareness on the part of all concerned of its mission in relation to its students, its supporters, and the community at large. Every institution operates in terms of certain fundamentals such as the discovery, preservation, and dissemination of information, the development of student character, and the preparation of its students to live in the world. These are long-range goals, not to be confused with objectives realistically determined in the light of such factors as the purpose for which the institution was founded, the point of view it represents, the community in which it is located, the constituencies it serves, the needs — social, cultural, and material — of its community and clientele, and the institution's resources — human, physical, and financial.

The forms of educational institutions are less important than their functions, and their educative functions need to be stated in terms of the changes they seek to induce in their students. A statement of institutional objectives is a description of the effects the educational programs are designed to have on students.

What are the distinguishing marks of well-defined objectives? They are (a) clear, appropriate to higher education, intellectual in emphasis, and broad in scope; (b) identifiable with the particular institution; (c) stated in terms of results sought, not merely the means by which they are to be attained; (d) susceptible of attainment in reasonable degree; (e) honest in describing what the institution plans and constructs its programs to accomplish; (f) expressed in simple terms; (g) understood and accepted within the institution as guides for thought and action.

All worthy institutions of higher education have certain common aims. They propose to introduce students to a body of knowledge, to increase their interest in intellectual matters, to enrich their cultural lives, to help them develop powers of discrimination and judgment, to foster their commitment to ethical, intellectual, social, and perhaps religious values, and to encourage the pursuit of lifelong learning. These are basic goals of higher education and should be expressed in suitable terms and proportions in statements of institutional objectives.

Equally important, and necessarily compatible with institutional objectives, are those of individual curricula and courses. Whereas institutional goals tend to be framed in general terms, course and curricular objectives ought to be more precise and geared directly to particular learning and understanding. Course objectives should be designed not only with respect to content, but with regard to developing techniques and skills which facilitate further learning, e.g., in the laboratory and in independent study.

Each institution also needs to define those additional aims and emphases which reflect its particular character and individuality, such as specialized research and public service; or specific preparation for employment, for the next stage of education, for life as a human being in society, for continuing education, or for short-term pursuits. These cannot be compartmentalized, and interrelationships should be stressed.

Clearly, institutional purposes and objectives as well as those of courses and curricula depend upon a continuing internal evaluation program for their vitality and viability.

PROGRAM

There must always be a sensible and demonstrable relationship between stated purposes and objectives and the actual program. An institution is likely to serve its clientele better by doing a few things well than by undertaking too much. It should be educationally economical — designed to produce the maximum long-range results with the least waste motion. Its courses and curricula ought to be continuously under obligation to prove their merit. Curricula should be simple and flexible, grouping options and emphases into a few general patterns so that they can be seen in perspective and kept in balance. The plan of studies should focus a student's attention on a limited number of subjects at a time and develop a sense of relationship among them.

The curricula should be under constant evaluation, with modifications being made as changes in the educational situation require. Provision for this evaluation and the planning which parallel it are essential. Intelligent, directed experimentation should be encouraged. Instructional methods should vary with the subject matter, the intent being to evoke a response from the student and to stimulate participation in the educational process. Audio-visual materials, computers, field trips, and internships are examples of alternative approaches to teaching and learning which, along with other opportunities for illustrative realistic experience, should be systematically worked into the program. Current academic offerings should also be examined in the light of those offered by other institutions; possibilities for fruitful interinstitutional cooperation should not be overlooked.

Technical and professional curricula present the dilemma of how to balance the program between the area of specialization and general education. The cue to a decision lies in each institution's own objectives. The dual aim requires a calculated division of the limited instructional time available, with an allotment to general education proportionate to the place it occupies in the institution's objectives. The time allotted should be sufficient to accomplish its purpose.

What kinds of courses should be counted as general education in a technical curriculum? Those which have the best chance of fulfilling its aims for students, which draw them into important new areas of intellectual experience, increase awareness of their cultural heritage, and prepare them to make sound judgments outside, as well as within,

their specialized field. Professional usefulness should not be the only ground on which courses are selected, and general education components should not be limited to courses which develop communication and computation skills. The general education sequence should be designed with an eye to its true intent and the distinctive contribution it can make to the total intellectual growth of each student.

The curriculum for graduate study should provide for the breadth of research and stimulation of independent thinking which work on the graduate level pre-supposes and develops. In institutions where graduate instruction and research constitute a core sector of their total program, realistic recognition must be given to the extended demands these place on faculty, finances, facilities, and other resources. Graduate, research, and public service programs should be under the same obligation to demonstrate their validity and effectiveness as all other programs within the framework of an institution's stated mission.

An institution's educational program is actually far broader than its curriculum. It includes the total range of influences which an institution brings to bear upon its students or which incidentally impinge upon them. In this sense it includes not only the courses of study and what goes on in the classrooms, laboratories, studios, and the library, but also the effects of counselling, student activities, athletics, lounges, cafeterias and dining rooms, dormitories, lectures and exhibitions, and informal student and faculty contacts.

So far as these forces are controlled by the institution they comprise its educational opportunity. The test of the program in this large sense is the skill with which each aspect of it is molded and used explicitly to foster the achievement of some phase of the objectives, and the extent to which these influences, taken as a whole, can be expected to lead students to attain the institution's aims for them.

An academic institution is also in an especially advantageous position to include community services as an integral part of its program, consistent with its purposes and objectives. Opportunities for community education and service — continuing education, cultural events, joint use of facilities, etc. — are virtually limitless, but an institution must avoid the perils of overextending its mission or its resources. Carefully planned and skillfully executed, a sound program of community services, catering to the peculiar educational and cultural needs of its various constituencies, can add significant dimensions to an institution's educational endeavors. When educational programs are conducted off-campus, or when special programs such as week-end colleges are offered on campus, they should be subject to procedural and quality controls sufficient to safeguard the institution's academic integrity.

OUTCOMES

The deciding factor in assessing any institution is evidence of the extent to which it achieves the objectives it has set for itself. Such evidence is, of course, difficult to assemble and to evaluate, but the necessity of seeking it continually is inescapable.

Ultimately there are only three questions which need to be asked about an educational institution: Has it clearly defined objectives which are appropriate to higher education and to its own potential? Does it have the programs and resources to attain them? How well does it achieve them?

The third question may be difficult to answer, since many of the objectives of higher education are deeply concerned with the encouragement of intellectual and personal maturity which are not amenable to objective measurement or statistical analysis. Nevertheless, one of the primary marks of a competent faculty, administration and governing board is the skill with which they seek answers, criticizing and improving their procedures in the light of their findings. The approaches need be neither elaborate nor solely dependent on mechanical means, but they should be thorough and persistent.

They use tests and measurements, among other means, to discover all that such devices can tell about the progress of their students in the mastery of subject matter, development of skills, logical precision, and ability to apply knowledge. They test student achievement in general as well as specialized areas of the curriculum, on an inclusive as well as course-by-course basis, and when possible in comparison with student achievement elsewhere. They make frequent appraisals of the records of their graduates in education beyond the two or four-year college level. They survey alumni opinions. They solicit reports from employers. They do not depend wholly on any indices, but they search and weigh them all for evidence of progress or success.

Something can be learned through close observation of student conduct. How responsible and constructive is student participation in their own governance? What attitudes and maturity of interests do the students exhibit in their activities and in their response to cultural, civic and professional opportunities? Do their interests change while they are in college? What can be discerned about their attitude toward social values? What are the characteristics of their social life? Do they show increasing interest in scholarship and/or proficiency as they get deeper into their subjects? Observations of student conduct are not of much use in institutional evaluation unless they reveal changing patterns of behavior or growth and at least suggest that the changes are related to the institution's educational program.

A plan for the measurement of outcomes may well have these sections: first, an evaluation of undergraduate scholastic achievement, taking the form of comparison of scores in standardized tests with the results of placement examinations taken at entrance; second, a study of the performance of graduates in senior colleges or in graduate and professional schools; third, a long-term study of the achievements, both vocational and avocational, of the alumni based on data gathered periodically and systematically. This will obviously involve continuous cooperation between the alumni and the administration. An intensive study of one class from entrance through graduation and beyond may be fruitful. Such longitudinal studies should be a regular function of an internal institutional research program.

Outcome studies, if they are to be most productive, should accumulate useful data for institutional research and development. Their utilization is a measure of an institution's

sophistication in the use of the self-study process and its understanding of the nature of the data needed for sound planning.

ADMISSIONS AND STUDENT SERVICES

An important index of an institution's calibre is the appropriateness of its admissions policy as evidenced in requirements, standards, and procedures. The policy must be clearly stated and related to the objectives and resources of the institution. Likewise, programs and services must be formulated in relation to the admissions policy. An institution which maintains an open-door policy must make adequate provision for testing, counselling and compensatory services. Similarly, one which has a very selective admissions policy must ensure sufficient challenge and stimulus for its students. In all cases, there should be a demonstrable correlation between admissions policies and educational practices.

Two basic questions need to be asked about students. One is whether their qualifications and motivations are compatible with the institution's objectives. The other is whether the institution is attracting and serving those it purports to serve or who can benefit from its instruction. Every institution needs a carefully planned admissions program, but the criteria which are useful in one institution may be pointless in another. Even the requirements for enrollment in one curriculum may legitimately differ from those of another in the same institution, if both are intelligently grounded in sound educational objectives. The key word is *appropriate:* appropriate to the aims of the institution and of a particular program, and to the needs of the students.

Any admissions policy has special ramifications requiring careful planning and requiring continuous follow-up studies to determine whether it is serving the needs and interests of its students or how it could be doing so more effectively. Such a policy affects all aspects of institutional planning, funding, and staffing. Among the questions to be asked: How consistent is the policy with the purpose and objectives of the institution? Is the faculty aware of and ready to cope with the spectrum of ability and preparation characteristic of students admitted under such policy? Are the counselling services adequate? Can the institution afford remedial and developmental courses and specialized staff if required? Is the institution prepared to serve non-traditional students (e.g., veterans, older citizens, disadvantaged) if it is attracting or recruiting them? Are programs and curricula sufficiently diversified to form a lattice-work of educational opportunity and individual adjustment? Are admissions policies and access to curricula compatible and clearly delineated?

Selection and supervision of students require a well organized student personnel program, extending from recruitment to placement after graduation and alumni organization. The student personnel program should be concerned with advisement, discipline, health, government, athletic and non-athletic activities, and student-faculty-administration relationships. Student regulations should be realistic and clearly stated in

appropriate official publications. Information about fees and charges and the institution's explicit policy with respect to refunds of payments should also be generally available.

Activities such as student government, intramural and intercollegiate athletics, dramatics, journalism, music, social affairs and others are supplements to the formal instructional program. They should reflect student interests and student-faculty cooperation in planning and be integral parts of and contribute directly to the effectiveness of the total educational program.

An educational institution has an obligation to provide for the development as well as instruction of its students in ways consistent with its objectives and the nature of its curricula. Few educational institutions propose only to stock students' minds and sharpen their wits, or to do so only through fixed curricula. The classroom has to be augmented by services which have much to do with the learning process and the student's achievement. These include health services, financial aid, job placement, work-study programs, student activities, personal, academic and career counselling. The management of information and record-keeping services is critically important, and the records and procedures should be subject to annual audits comparable to those administered to the institution's finances.

Help is needed to select wisely when students are confronted with a choice among programs and of electives within curricula; thoughtful, encouraging counsel as they form their scale of values; an environment in which personal integrity, social understanding, and human sensitivity flourish; unobtrusive but positive faculty interest if extracurricular activities are to supplement rather than subvert academic life.

Expressions of intent do not produce results. There must be definition, organization, and responsibility. The forms vary. Some institutions assign student personnel officers to a central staff; others prefer to diffuse them throughout the faculty. When the work enjoys good leadership and genuine faculty and staff support, the structure is less important than the results.

All institutions should give careful thought to placement services for students. They must be aware of the special problems students may encounter in seeking transfer to a baccalaureate program or to graduate or professional schools. All students, not only those in technical, professional, or paraprofessional curricula, need to know about job opportunities, licensing and certification requirements, and many other kinds of information. Counselling is essential to any sound placement program, but it should be an integral part of the overall student personnel services.

THE FACULTY

The faculty is, or ought to be, the expert professional body to which primary responsibility for devising and developing the academic program is committed, under the leader-

ship of the chief executive officer and within the framework of the educational objectives approved by the board of trustees. The role of the faculty should be clearly defined and understood by the governing board.

The responsibility of the faculty in the program is to supply the instruction necessary to make the curriculum effective. Clearly, in order to supply proper instruction, the faculty must consist of competent, professionally-prepared, interested individuals, each fully ready to accept responsibility for maintaining the highest level of professional competence.

The selection and supervision of the faculty are fundamental to the teaching function. Proper instructional staffing through continuing alertness to program requirements, adequate salary schedule, allowance of time to devote to professional advancement and development, equitable procedures for appointment, promotion, retention, and retirement, and attention to needs of optimum teaching facilities are essential. A role for faculty in institutional governance is an appropriate recognition of their professional competence and commitment. The existence and work of standing or ad hoc committees are essential to the smooth operation of an institution, but the work of such committees should not interfere with the regular duties of their members.

Educational institutions should contain within their environment the essence of the qualities they endeavor to impart, including the essential of nondiscrimination. They have a responsibility to develop selection and promotion standards and procedures based on principles which consider qualities, aptitudes, or talents simply as they pertain to the requirements of the position, with due regard for the rights of all qualified persons. Institutions are expected to review their positions and procedures regularly to determine their validity in keeping with these principles.

The existence of a collective bargaining arrangement is essentially an institutional matter, or in the case of some public institutions may be imposed by external authority. The Commission on Higher Education assumes no position with respect to a decision to bargain collectively, but it believes that all parties should be concerned about the impact of bargaining upon institutional procedures and educational effectiveness.

A sound educational environment requires a secure framework of academic freedom. Academic freedom and job security are not synonymous and should not be contingent on each other. Regardless of whether faculty members hold probationary initial appointments or are on extended contract or permanent tenure, the same principles of academic freedom must apply to all. Academic freedom has to do with a method of inquiry rather than with the personal views of the inquirer. It gives one the right and implies the obligation as a scholar to examine all data and to question every assumption. It debars one from preconceived conclusions. It obliges a teacher to present all information fairly, because it asserts the student's right to know the facts. Academic freedom does not require neutrality on the part of either an individual or an institution. It is consistent with earnest and declared efforts to advance a particular point of view, if it be insisted that complete access to the facts underlie the argument and that the argument be plainly distinguished from the

inquiry. To restrict the availability or limit the presentation of data or opinions, even though they may be considered erroneous, is to deny academic freedom.

ORGANIZATION AND ADMINISTRATION

The characteristics described in the preceding paragraphs are essential ingredients of excellence in an educational institution, especially clearly defined objectives, a good program, strong teaching, and abundant, well used learning resources. But it will not have these essential assets long without a competent, imaginative, responsible administration and governing board. Organization and administration gain their importance only as they make good teaching possible, yet good teaching depends upon them.

Organization connotes the plans and operations of the institution for advancing its purposes and attaining its objectives. Effective organization depends on carefully developed by-laws or a constitution, defining clearly the responsibilities of the board of trustees, the president or otherwise designated chief administrative officer, the dean and other officers, the faculty, and essential committees. Ordinarily, the by-laws or constitution will be established by the board of trustees. It can be said that an educational institution is well established when it operates on clearly delineated procedures and can chart its organization graphically, but no particular organizational pattern can be generally recommended.

The president of the institution is responsible under the trustees for leadership in implementing its plans, staffing and maintaining the organization, effectively using the support accorded by the trustees, and directing the institution toward the attainment of its objectives. The president's role is to enlist, maintain, and lead a professional staff who will advise and counsel with the trustees; and to represent the institution before the public, which may include helping the trustees raise money.

Preferably, an educational institution's chief executive should have an appropriate combination of academic background, professional training and teaching experience, but such qualities as intelligence, integrity, vigor, administrative skill, tact and imagination are indispensable. The quality of the institution will usually reflect its leader's quality. If the head of a campus must work under another officer, as in a multi-unit system, the organizational structure must facilitate the fullest exercise of the individual's talents.

The administrative staff is the executive agency of the institution's plans and operations. To be successful, it must be well organized; the individuals composing it must be competent in their particular phases of administration; it must be adequately staffed to carry on all of its work; it must, under able leadership, be so coordinated as to work effectively as a unit. The various officers should so function as to make their individual contributions to the administration of the institution without hindering the functioning of the administrative staff as a unit.

The competence of an individual member of the administrative staff is measured by ability to organize, direct, and accomplish officially assigned duties. This will entail not only aptitude for and interest in the work, but also initiative and creativity along with related training and experience. It will involve, further, a personality capable of working smoothly with students and colleagues and of dealing harmoniously with persons outside the institution.

An administrative team, regardless of its organization and the competence of its individual members, can not function successfully unless it is properly staffed to carry on the work that falls upon it. Members of the administrative staff should have the time and assistance necessary to enable them to discharge their duties efficiently. Assignment of multiple functions to one individual, or the assignment of administrative work as extra duty (with or without compensation) to full-time faculty members without due consideration of the full teaching and administrative burden, is evidence of administrative inadequacy.

The administrative organization should provide effective leadership, with the responsibilities of each position clearly defined. Each major administrative officer needs close contact with day-to-day operations and faculty thinking to be effective, plus enough freedom from the pressure of detail to stimulate, give balance, supply ideas, remove sources of irritation, and in other ways to assist the faculty to grow professionally and to concentrate on the work for which the institution exists. It is poor economy to load teachers with administrative or clerical duties. Similarly, continuous classroom experience may help administrators retain perspective, but the students will be badly served if administrative exigencies hamper their orderly preparation, regular classroom attendance, and mastery of their discipline.

The nature and quality of institutional planning — both short and long-range — are basic indicators of sound administration. While plans are always subject to change, without them an institution can quickly lose its sense of purpose and direction. Planning activities are useful means of involving appropriate constituencies in the ongoing development of an institution — students, faculty, administrators, trustees, alumni, advisory committees of interested citizens — but they must be more than merely time-serving exercises. In its best sense, institutional planning stimulates imaginative and creative proposals and approaches for strengthening the institution and enhancing its educational effectiveness, and includes means for implementing the plans. Continuous self-study is an essential ingredient of such planning.

The preparation of a budget for annual operation is the ultimate responsibility of the president and administrative staff of the institution, with appropriate consultation of departments, divisions, and other units. The budget is based on complete estimates of income and expenditure, checked for accuracy and considered by a budget committee in terms of institutional resources, needs, plans, and priorities. The budget when complete is presented by the president to the trustees for their consideration and approval. Once approved, it should control the institution's operations, subject to amendment by the trustees as necessity arises.

BOARD OF TRUSTEES

The overall control and support of an institution's plans and operation are the responsibility of the board of trustees. In the hands and authority of the trustees are not only the approval and publication of purposes and objectives, but also the general plan and structure of the institution and provision of the support necessary for its facilities and personnel. The extent to which a board is aware of and accepts its responsibilities and its effectiveness in performing its mission, are critically important to an institution's very existence.

The governing board represents the sponsors, the institution's constituency, and the public interest. It is responsible for seeing that the institution is what it is intended to be, that it fulfills the purposes for which it was founded (unless the purposes have been legally changed), and ensures its continuance. To this end, a board appoints a chief executive officer to direct its operation, provides advice on major issues, and strives to conserve and develop the institution's resources. The board's function is implicit in the word "trustee" by which its members are commonly known. They are entrusted with the institution's property and assets, but more importantly, they are charged with upholding the institution's reason for being.

Good trustees believe in the institution they serve. They are normally not employed by the institution or in any position to gain financially from it. They are its disinterested and impartial governors and simultaneously its most loyal interpreters and supporters. They undertake their office with a sense of responsibility and readiness to become acquainted with their own institution in more than a superficial way. They must be sensitive and responsive to the needs and interests of their constituents and to the specialized nature of educational problems. Channels for communication and consultation with all of the institution's constituencies, and especially the faculty and students, are essential.

Lack of commitment, or failure to take enough time for the work, are the main reasons a trustee proves inadequate. When a board's responsibilities become so extensive that its members can not give sufficient time to master them all, it may be necessary to create committees or bodies of some kind which can study particular matters in detail. Individual competence should be the primary factor in selection of trustees, just as it is for administrators and faculty members.

A board should be large enough for a division of labor, yet not cumbersome. Members should represent different ages, points of view, and interests. There should be a periodic turnover in membership, through election or appointment for terms long enough to provide experience and continuity but not continuous reelection or reappointment; new vigor and new ideas are needed periodically. In the absence of retirement or removal rules, which are desirable, board members ought to withdraw voluntarily when they reach the staff's retirement age or become unable to attend meetings and institutional functions regularly. The board of trustees should have clearly defined by-laws setting forth their purposes and policies and establishing their mode of operation.

The chief executive officer must have full and easy access to the board responsible for the institution's governance. In a multiple-unit system each unit is important enough and

its needs and problems complex enough to justify a sub-board of its own or an advisory board to which the primary board may assign limited functions. A public institution may have a particular context of relationships with public agencies or political bodies, but the trustees are responsible for ensuring the institution's academic integrity.

RESOURCES

Resources denote the material and tangible support of the instructional program. This includes funds, instructional buildings, library, laboratories, athletics plant, student activity buildings, campus, residences, instructional material including library holdings, laboratory and shop equipment, audio-visual aids, etc.

The provision of funds has already been referred to as a function of the trustees. In this connection it is part of their duty to know and employ the institution's full resources, including not only the income from investments, public funds, student fees, or a religious denomination, but also the resources latent in community good will and public generosity. No institution has such abundant resources that their utilization can not be increased by wise planning.

An institutional development plan should be based on a working definition of the term "adequate resources" as it applies to plant, equipment, materials and money to support the work of instruction for its particular student body. Any serious deficiency is bound to attenuate the quality of work done, and in the long run to prevent or delay attainment of objectives.

Of equal importance with knowing the resources required, and planning to meet the requirements, are proper management and use of the institution's plant, equipment, materials and money. To this end, qualified personnel are needed, with particular attention to the professional training and experience of financial officers, librarians, heads of maintenance, and directors of any auxiliary enterprises.

It will be noted that no mention is made here of required minima for endowment, fixed income per student, library holdings, square feet of instructional space per student or other fixed measures. The adequacy of each institution's resources must be judged in terms of its objectives and programs. Activities and facilities supplementing the formal instructional program may include access to observatories, research institutes, art galleries, museums, organized off-campus service and travel programs, computational equipment, and the like.

LIBRARY/LEARNING CENTER

The effectiveness of the library as a learning center is of paramount importance. Its collections should be appropriate and adequate to support the instructional program, and

they should be widely used by both students and faculty. The quality of a library's holdings, their direct relevance to the institution's educational programs, and the extent of their utilization, are more important than merely the number of volumes catalogued or shelved.

The faculty and the library staff need to work closely together in planning the development and employment of library resources to achieve their educational objectives, and also to stimulate recreational reading. The director and staff must demonstrate the competence and be given sufficient responsibility and funds to facilitate the optimum functioning of the library as a learning center. Status and privileges of library staff should be commensurate with the significance and responsibilities of their positions.

The library/learning resources center is the chief resource of any faculty and student body. The nature and content of the collection will depend on the institution's programs and objectives, but while the emphasis should not be placed totally on size, the collection must realistically relate to the institution's enrollment, program diversity and complexity, and the nature of its constituencies.

The principles on which a library/learning resource center's adequacy can be tested are clear. It should support all the subjects the institution offers, containing or having ready access to important source materials and a truly representative selection of secondary works and special studies covering each field from a variety of significant points of view. The depth and extent of the coverage must exceed the immediate requirements of the student body in order to serve and stimulate the exceptional student and to nourish the intellectual life of the faculty. For the specific fields taught, sufficient support material in related fields should be available to show the areas of instruction in proper perspective and to encourage intellectual endeavors which enliven learning and induce habitual use of the learning center.

A library/learning resources center needs also to reveal the general scope of the learned and creative world, fostering broader interests among its students by surrounding them with basic and interpretive print and non-print materials and standard reference works in the general fields of learning. This is especially necessary in institutions whose instructional programs are technical or specialized. They must encourage cultural breadth and intellectual depth as well as practical competence, and there should be some provision for recreational reading matter.

Any library/learning resources center should be largely self-contained. Other libraries, even convenient ones, are not likely to be used as the institution's own collections are, and use is the object. The library should itself provide all the materials students need in the ordinary course of their work, plus enough surrounding depth and enrichment to draw them into the fringes beyond. The increasing availability of cultural and specialized information on tape, records, and film should not be neglected in developing the library's resources. Neither should possibilities be overlooked for linking up with data retrieval and computer systems which can increase the library's value and dimensions as an information and learning center. Cooperative arrangements with neighboring libraries and networks are encouraged as means of greatly enhancing an institution's resources.

It is not uncommon to find developmental learning laboratories, individualized instruction units, and language laboratories as parts of the total library/learning resources complex. Learning resources centers have become, in many instances, the setting for mini-courses, community-based learning programs, external degree programs, and many other activities.

These are examples of the expanded concept of the library/learning resources center intended to encourage greater use and *use* is the key to fulfillment of its goals and objectives. Nothing matters if the facilities are not used. Consequently, this should be the faculty's and the librarian's chief concern, especially the faculty's, for a little-used library/learning resources center usually reflects routine or textbook teaching.

A fine building does not make a good library/learning resources center, but an excellent collection is useless unless it is available and inviting to use. Seating, lighting, arrangement of books, acoustical treatment and the like are to be judged by their serviceability in making the center a convenient and attractive place for study.

Developing and operating a library/learning resources center are complex tasks, the success of which affects every aspect of the institution's work, and those who are in charge of it need professional training. Because the center must be related to the classroom, that institution is doubly fortunate whose librarians have had teaching experience in a subject field. But the library/learning resources center in the best sense is also a classroom, and the best librarians are those who consider themselves teachers and not merely custodians of books, reference collections, or other instructional materials and equipment.

PLANT AND EQUIPMENT

Of equal importance with knowing the resources required, and planning to meet the requirement, is proper management and use of the institution's plant, equipment, materials and money. To this end qualified personnel are needed, with particular attention to the professional training and experience of financial officers, laboratory technicians, heads of maintenance, and directors of any auxiliary enterprises. Working conditions and pay schedules for operational staff should be in line with those prevailing locally.

Buildings and equipment must be looked upon as means which facilitate an institution's work, but neither guarantee its superiority nor relegate it to inferiority. A good institution deserves good housing and equipment, for they make better teaching possible. Suitable buildings promote economy and convenience in scheduling, heighten usefulness and efficiency, attract students and faculty, increase prestige, and add greatly to morale. Buildings do not make an educational institution great, but lack of facilities limits its possibilities. Institutions using temporary facilities should ensure that such facilities meet all educational specifications.

FINANCING AND ACCOUNTING

The governing board of an institution must approve the institution's annual budget, which is the expression of the institution's plans in financial terms. Unless the governing board approves the budget it can not fulfill its legal responsibility or ensure that the allocation or acquisition of resources is consistent with institutional priorities and plans.

When an institution depends for its support on an external agency — state, church, or other public or private agency — the external agency should determine the amount of support it will provide and may appropriately indicate in broad terms the categories and amounts for which support is provided. The external agency should not, through line item control or other means, determine in detail how funds are to be spent. This is a function of the governing board and the institution's officers.

Once funds have been allocated, the normal expectation should be that the amount of funds will not be reduced. If subsequent developments necessitate reduction of the allocation, the governing board and the institution's officers should determine how and where the reductions are to be made in accord with a planned order of priorities.

Both long-range and short-range financial planning are absolute necessities. The institution, through its governing body, must ensure that programs offered can be supported by the necessary fiscal resources. A standard educational institution accounting and auditing system is equally imperative, and an external audit should be conducted annually.

INNOVATION AND EXPERIMENTATION

Perceptive and imaginative experimentation aimed at intensifying the effectiveness of higher education is a sign of institutional vitality and should be continually encouraged from within. The Commission on Higher Education supports no particular theories or styles of education or organization; neither does it prescribe specific rules or formulas. It is cognizant that special requirements may pertain to some institutions, but these should not be permitted to inhibit innovative approaches and emphases in their educational programs. The Commission insists only that new departures and adaptations be consistent with an institution's purposes and objectives as originally established or as modified to accommodate new conditions.

CATALOGS AND OTHER PUBLICATIONS

The catalog is the official publication wherein the institution is described. Its statements should be in keeping with its importance as the document setting forth the relation-

ship between and the obligations of both the institution and the student. It should contain a statement of the objectives of the institution, a complete roster of the faculty (distinguishing between full-time and part-time) showing earned degrees and the institutions granting them, specific entrance and graduation requirements, complete financial information concerning costs and refunds, and a description of all courses and other educational opportunities to be offered in the year for which the catalog is printed.

The integrity of an institution is reflected in all of its publications, not only its catalog, although that is usually regarded as the document of record. To the extent that an institution's publications are honest and accurate statements of conditions and opportunities, to that extent is it entitled to public trust and the confidence of the educational community.

A list of publications dealing with particular or related aspects of these guidelines may be obtained from the Commission office.

No assurance can be given by the Commission on Higher Education or the Middle States Association that every accredited institution necessarily meets these characteristics in equal proportions.